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Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library

Guide to the Betty Dunn Smedley Papers

WA MSS S-4526



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Collection Overview

REPOSITORY: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library
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CALL NUMBER: WA MSS S-4526

CREATOR: Smedley, Betty Dunn , author

TITLE: Betty Dunn Smedley papers

DATES: 1907-1984

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 4.92 linear feet (5 boxes)

LANGUAGE: English

SUMMARY: The collection consists of correspondence, financial and business records, printed material, and a small amount of personal papers documenting the career and life of Austin, Texas rare bookseller Betty Dunn Smedley.

ONLINE FINDING AID: To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.smedley>

Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Beinecke Library reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/beinecke.smedley>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please send an email with the call number, box number(s), and folder number(s) to beinecke.images@yale.edu.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b. box
f. folder

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Gift of Michael Vinson, 2018.

Conditions Governing Access

This collection is open for research.

Conditions Governing Use

The Betty Dunn Smedley Papers is the physical property of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University. Literary rights, including copyright, belong to the authors or their legal heirs and assigns. For further information, consult the appropriate curator.

Preferred Citation

Betty Dunn Smedley Papers. Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

Processing Information

Collections are processed to a variety of levels, depending on the work necessary to make them usable, their perceived research value, the availability of staff, competing priorities, and whether or not further accruals are expected. The library attempts to provide a basic level of preservation and access for all collections, and does more extensive processing of higher priority collections as time and resources permit.

This collection received a basic level of processing, including rehousing and minimal organization. Various acquisitions associated with the collection have been merged and organized as a whole.

Information included in the Description of Papers note and Collection Contents section is drawn from information supplied with the collection and from an initial survey of the contents. Folder titles appearing in the contents list below are often based on those provided by the creator or previous custodian. Titles have not been verified against the contents of the folders in all cases. Otherwise, folder titles are supplied by staff during initial processing.

This finding aid may be updated periodically to account for new acquisitions to the collection and/or revisions in arrangement and description.

Betty Dunn Smedley (1888-1985)

Betty Dunn Smedley was an American rare bookseller of Western Americana, particularly the work of printer Carl Hertzog and historian J. Evetts Haley. Born Betty Dunn on December 8, 1888 in Mississippi, she married oil and gas attorney Graham Smedley in Dallas, Texas in 1907. For most of their marriage the couple lived in Austin, Texas, where Graham Smedley served on the Supreme Court of Texas for almost 20 years. After her husband's death in 1954, Betty Smedley was briefly curator of the Hoblitzelle Theater Collection (now Albert Davis Collection of Theater Artifacts) at the University of Texas at Austin. Smedley also sold real estate until she began her career in rare bookselling. She established Betty Smedley Rare Books and operated out of her home in Austin from about 1967 to 1985. Smedley published at least eleven catalogs of rare books, including *A Carl Hertzog Hope Chest* (1972), *The J. Evetts Haley Roundup* (1974), which was designed by Hertzog, and *Ranges of Grass and the Men on Horseback* (1976), which featured the introductory essay "Betty and Her Books" by Haley.

Scope and Contents

The collection consists of correspondence, financial and business records, printed material, and a small amount of personal papers documenting the career and life of Austin, Texas rare bookseller Betty Dunn Smedley. Included are files related to other Texas book dealers, historians, libraries, publishers and fine press printers, artists, and collectors of Western Americana, such as José Cisneros, Dudley Dobie, J. Evetts Haley, Carl Hertzog, David Holman of Wind River Press, Hobart Huson, Alfred A. Knopf, Al Lowman, Willis Lutz, W. M. Morrison, Ray S. Walton, and William Witliff of Encino Press. The collection contains numerous catalogs printed by Smedley, among them *A Carl Hertzog Hope Chest* and *Ranges of Grass and the Men on*

Horseback. Also present is correspondence with J. L. Allhands, an author of railroad history, and research files he gave to Smedley on three of his books: *Gringo Builders* (1931); *Boll Weevil* (1946); and *Uriah Lott* (1949). In the early 1930s, Smedley researched the Red River and trader Holland Coffee for an unpublished book, and the collection contains correspondence, photographs, and printed material related to the topic, including letters from White Eagle, an Indigenous writer living in Houston who grew up near the North Fork of the river; historian Joseph Bradfield Thoburn; and librarian Ernest Winkler. The collection also contains correspondence with New York Public Library curator George Freedley and University of Texas librarian Fannie Ratchford related to the Hoblitzelle Theater Collection, which Smedley curated in the late 1950s.

Arrangement

Organized into two series: I. Correspondence and Financial Records, 1907–1984. II. Printed Material, 1930–1982.

Collection Contents

Series I: Correspondence and Financial Records, 1907–1984

4.5 linear feet (4 boxes)

This series primarily contains correspondence, invoices, purchase orders, and other records of Betty Dunn Smedley's rare book business. Also included are correspondence, notes, ephemera, clippings, and photographs related to her early research on the Red River and Texas and Colorado history, and her work as curator of the Hoblitzelle Theater Collection at the University of Texas at Austin. Correspondents include historians J. L. Allhands and J. Evetts Haley, printers and publishers such as Carl Hertzog, Alfred A. Knopf, William Witliff, and Ray S. Walton, artist José Cisneros, New York Public Library curator George Freedley, and University of Texas librarian Fannie Ratchford. The series also contains a small amount of personal papers and letters of Smedley and her husband, George Smedley.

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

b. 1, f. 1	Account book	1972
b. 1, f. 2	Aldredge Bookstore [Wright Howes]	1932, 1974–1982
b. 1, f. 3	Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn symposium	1977
	Allhands, J. L.	
b. 1, f. 4-7	Correspondence and papers	1930–1978
b. 1, f. 8-9	Papers related to <i>Uriah Lott</i>	1940–1974
b. 1, f. 10-11	Papers related to <i>Gringo Builders</i>	1931–1974
b. 1, f. 12-13	Papers related to <i>Boll Weevil</i>	1939–1947
b. 1, f. 14	Anderson, Leon	1972–1974
b. 1, f. 15	"Banks etc. pd. bills"	1972
b. 1, f. 16	Buckingham, Lewis	1978–1980
b. 1, f. 17	Cisneros, José	1972–1977
b. 1, f. 18	"Corr."	1981
b. 1, f. 19	Correspondence and ephemera	1927–1983
b. 1, f. 20-23	Correspondence and ephemera	1951–1981
b. 1, f. 24-25	Correspondence and printed material	1937–1980
b. 1, f. 26-27	Dobie, Dudley	1969–1980
b. 1, f. 28	Eakin Publications	1982–1983
b. 1, f. 29-30	Encino Press/William Witliff	1972–1983
b. 1, f. 31	Ephemera and clippings	1958–1976
b. 1, f. 32	Freedley, George (New York Public Library Theatre Collection)	1956–1959

b. 1, f. 33	Fannie Ratchford clippings	1932
b. 1, f. 34-35	"Fannie Ratchford in England and Irvington, N.Y. 1937"	1932-1958
b. 1, f. 36	"Golden File" [clippings, ephemera, notes, business records]	1962-1982
b. 2, f. 37-38	Haley, J. Evetts and Donald Ornduff	1955-1984
b. 2, f. 39	Haley, J. Evetts, "Diary of Michael Erskine"	1979
b. 2, f. 40	Hedgpeth, Don	1975-1976
b. 2, f. 41-42	Hertzog, Carl	1969-1984
b. 2, f. 43	Holman, David/Wind River Press	1974-1981
b. 2, f. 44	Huson, Hobart	1969-1975
b. 2, f. 45	"Important letters, etc."	1969-1981
b. 2, f. 46	Invoices, bank records, and insurance papers	1979
b. 2, f. 47-70	Invoices, bills, and purchase orders - General	1970-1984
b. 3, f. 71-80	Invoices, bills, and purchase orders - General	1970-1984
b. 3, f. 81	Jacobs, John C.	1972-1982
b. 3, f. 82	"Jenkins - W. M. Morrison"	1972-1979
b. 3, f. 83	Knopf, Alfred A.	1970-1981
b. 3, f. 84	Lowman, Al	undated
b. 3, f. 85	Lutz, Willis	1970-1975, undated
b. 3, f. 86	Martin, Bernard, letter to Graham Smedley	1954
b. 3, f. 87	McCubbin, Robert	1970-1977
b. 3, f. 88	Nixon, Pat Ireland	1972-1973
b. 3, f. 89	Northland Press	1974-1975
b. 3, f. 90	Porter, R. H.	1970-1973
b. 3, f. 91	Random House	1969-1981
b. 3, f. 92	Ray S. Walton	1974-1983
b. 3, f. 93	"Ray Whiteside, Midland"	undated
b. 3, f. 94	"Reactions to Cat. 6 - Hertzog Hope Chest"	1972
b. 3, f. 95	Red River research - correspondence Includes letters from the War Department, United States Government Printing Office, White Eagle, Joseph Bradford Thoburn, Ernest Winkler, Maxwell O. Hunley, and Judd Mortimer Lewis.	1931-1933

b. 3, f. 96	Research files Topics include history of the West, Holland Coffee, the Wichita people, and Colorado railroads.	1907-1932, undated
b. 3, f. 97	Robinson, Chandler	1973-1974
b. 3, f. 98	Ruby, James C.	1972
b. 3, f. 99	Russell, Traylor	1972-1974
b. 3, f. 100	Silver, William	1970-1973
b. 5, f. 118	"Streeter material, Dobie also" Includes lists of titles and prices for books that were included in Thomas W. Streeter's <i>Bibliography of Texas 1795-1845</i> .	circa 1931-1981
b. 3, f. 101	"Miscellaneous"	1974-1977, undated
b. 3, f. 102	"Texas Western Press - El Paso - Haywood Antone, director"	1972-1980
b. 3, f. 103	"Theatre Collection" [Hoblitzelle/Albert Davis Collection of Theater Artifacts]	1956-1958
b. 3, f. 104	"Unfinished business" [correspondence, ephemera]	1968-1974

Series II: Printed Material, 1930–1982*0.42 linear feet (1 box)*

This series contains catalogs of rare books for sale by Betty Dunn Smedley, as well as catalogs of other booksellers or collectors including *The American Indian*, published by the University of Oklahoma Press, and the *Catalog of the Library of Robert H. Porter*. Also present are ephemera, offprints of articles by Smedley and Charlotte T. Whaley, and a few booklets and serials.

Arranged alphabetically by folder title.

b. 4, f. 105	<i>The American Indian: A Catalog of 250 Books about the Indians of North, Central and South America published by the University of Oklahoma Press</i> [cover bears stamp of "Betty Smedley - Book Seller"]	circa 1971
b. 4, f. 106-109	Betty Dunn Smedley, Bookseller - catalogs	1971–1982
b. 4, f. 110	Booklets and journals	1931–1981
b. 4, f. 111	<i>A Carl Hertzog Hope Chest</i> (hardcover edition)	1972
b. 4, f. 112	<i>Catalog of the Library of Robert H. Porter</i>	1974
b. 5, f. 119	"A Day in the Life of Lon Tinkle" [oversize book announcement]	1982
b. 4, f. 113	"The Great Torch Race," address by Reginald Harvey Griffith	circa 1920
b. 4, f. 114	"J. Evetts Haley: A Study in Character and Verse," tribute by Louis W. Ingram	1981
b. 4, f. 115	"Legends of Wichita County," by Betty Dunn Smedley, reprinted from <i>Publications of the Texas Folklore Society</i>	1930
b. 4, f. 116	"A Particular Guy: Carl Hertzog Designs a Fine Book," by Charlotte Whaley, reprinted from <i>Southwest Review</i> [inscribed by the author and Hertzog]	1979
b. 4, f. 117	<i>Ranges of Grass and the Men of Horseback</i>	1976

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

Subjects

Antiquarian booksellers -- Catalogs
Book industries and trade -- United States
Booksellers and bookselling -- Texas
Booksellers and bookselling -- United States
Publishers and publishing -- United States
Small presses -- United States

Genres / Formats

Booksellers' catalogues
Photographs

Occupations

Antiquarian booksellers -- United States -- 20th Century
Authors -- United States -- 20th Century
Book collectors -- United States -- 20th Century
Historians -- United States -- 20th Century
Librarians -- United States -- 20th Century

Geographic Names

Texas -- Bibliography
Texas -- History
Texas -- Imprints
West (U.S.) -- Bibliography
West (U.S.) -- History
West (U.S.) -- Imprints

Names

Allhands, J. L. (James Lewellyn), 1879-1978
Cisneros, José, 1910-2009
Dobie, Dudley, 1904-1982
Freedley, George, 1904-1967
Haley, J. Evetts (James Evetts), 1901-1995
Hertzog, Carl
Holman, David
Huson, Hobart, 1893-1983
Knopf, Alfred A., 1892-1984
Lowman, Al
Lutz, Willis J.
Morrison, W. M. (William Melvin), 1914-
Ratchford, Fannie Elizabeth, 1887-1974

Smedley, Betty Dunn
Thoburn, Joseph B. (Joseph Bradfield),
1866-1941
White Eagle, active 1930
Winkler, Ernest William, 1875-1960
Wittliff, William D.

Corporate Bodies

Betty Smedley (Firm)
Ray S. Walton (Firm)